

Background:

The State P-16 Council frequently highlights exemplary collaborative initiatives among schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to raise the level of educational attainment and the quality of the workforce in a community or region.

Several stakeholders in the Louisville area partner with Jefferson Community and Technical College in its “HealthCareer Pathways” initiative to address the state and regional need for health care professionals, focus the career aspirations of high school students and increase their likelihood for college enrollment and degree completion, and provide support for the professional development and continual career and professional advancement of current health care workers. The initiative targets the fields of pharmacy technology, health information technology, diagnostic medical sonography, respiratory therapy, nursing, and other high need allied health fields. Participating employers include Norton Healthcare, Jewish Hospital & St. Mary’s Healthcare, Baptist Hospital East, Floyd Memorial Hospital, Nazareth Homes, Bee Hive Senior Living Homes, Home Instead Senior Care, Clark Memorial Hospital, and University Hospital.

The career pathways model provides an articulated framework for integrating academic, credit-bearing instruction with work experience, supported by career, academic, and non-academic advising. Through dual credit courses and specially tailored course modules, participating high school students have access to early college credit and professional training. Articulated programs and transfer of credit allow traditional and adult learners to build on their academic and work experience and advance through multiple points of academic program entry (certificate, diploma, associate, baccalaureate, and, in some cases, graduate programs).

Participating employers offer support educational advancement linked with incentives ranging from financial aid to time off from work and career development. Employer investment in the

educational advancement of the workforce, whether through professional development of current employees or recruitment of new ones, contribute to the raising the quality of work and service, per capita income, workforce capacity and quality, and standard of living in the area.

The JCTC initiative extends employer engagement further, however, by welcoming employer participation in curriculum development. As health care fields develop and change, course components and curricular design are modified in response to employer input, so students have access to up-to-date training that is current with workforce demands. The quality of academic programming in these professions offered by Kentucky colleges and schools improves accordingly, as does the employability of their graduates.

Carolyn O'Daniel, Dean, Allied Sciences and Nursing (Jefferson Community and Technical College), will provide an overview of these multiple partnerships and the refined transfer articulations they have developed. Joni Jenkins (Program Director, Health Career Pathways, JCTC), and Dan O'Bryan (Program Coordinator, Health Career Pathways, JCTC) will outline the work on career pathways linking high school dual credit curricula with postsecondary career preparation programs. Kimberly Black Maffet (Associate Vice President, Workforce Development, Norton Healthcare, Inc.), and Cindy Price (Assistant Director, Human Resources, Jewish Hospital & Saint Mary's HealthCare) will describe their educational incentives programs.

Staff preparation by Dianne M. Bazell